

Minutes of the State Board of Health  
June 13, 2001

A meeting of the Washington State Board of Health (SBOH) was held at the Eagle's Aerie #1 in Seattle, Washington. The public meeting of the SBOH was called to order by Linda Lake, Chair, at 1:10 p.m. who addressed the attendees with the following statement:

"This is a public meeting of the SBOH held under provision of RCW 43.20. Notice of the meeting was provided in accordance with provisions of RCW 34.05, the Administrative Procedures Act. Those members having any conflict of interest on any item coming before the Board will report that conflict with respect to the particular subject under consideration. In case of challenge of any Board members by the public, the Board shall decide the status of the challenged members to participate before considering the substance of the matter.

Copies of all materials supplied to the Board for today's meeting have been available since close of business last Friday from the Board's Olympia office and on the Board's Web site at [www.doh.wa.gov/sboh](http://www.doh.wa.gov/sboh). They are also available today, along with anything else we have received since, at the table in the back of the room. To conserve public funds, we have only made as many copies as we feel will be needed, so we may run out of some particularly popular items. If you do not find a document you need, please ask Desiree Robinson or another Board staff person for one.

Our meeting today is open to the public, so please feel free to listen in on informal discussions involving Board members or staff, including any that may occur during breaks or lunch."

**The following Board members were present:**

Linda Lake, Chair  
Charles R. Chu, DPM  
Ed Gray, MD  
Thomas H. Locke, MD, MPH  
Joe Finkbonner, MHA  
Vickie Ybarra, RN, MPH  
Maxine Hayes, State Health Officer, Department of Health Designee  
The Honorable Margaret Pageler, JD  
Carl S. Osaki, RS, MSPH

**The following Board members were absent:**

Mary Selecky, Secretary, Department of Health  
The Honorable Neva J. Corkrum, Vice Chair

**State Board of Health Staff present:**

Don Sloma, Executive Director	Desiree Robinson, Executive Assistant
Janice Englehart, Senior Health Policy Advisor	Doreen Garcia, Senior Health Policy Advisor
Donna Russell, Senior Health Policy Analyst	Ramona Nelson, Office Assistant Senior
Craig McLaughlin, Senior Health Policy Manager	Melissa Burke-Cain, Assistant Attorney General

**Guests and Other Participants:**

Alex Coleman, Project Manager, Salishan Environmental Justice Study  
Charlie Cundiff, Executive Director, Environmental Coalition of South Seattle  
Rob Duff, DOH Office of Environmental Health Assessments  
Amy Duggan, American Lung Association  
Daniel Ford, Advocacy Coordinator for Columbia Legal Services  
John Guevara, South Park resident  
Patty Hayes, Director, DOH Policy, Legislative and Constituent Relations  
Ray Hellwig, Northwest Regional Director of the Department of Ecology  
Jim Krieger, MD, MPH, Epidemiology, Public Health, Seattle and King County  
Karen Larson, Ph.D., U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

Michael Letourneau, EPA, Region X, Office of Civil Rights and Environmental Justice  
 Ngozi Oleru, Chief, Environmental Health, Public Health Seattle-King County  
 John Ridgeway, Department of Ecology  
 Jesus Rodriguez, Community Liaison, SeaMar Community Health Centers  
 Jack Scannel, Chemist and Physicist, Environmental Coalition of South Seattle  
 Yalonde Sinde, Community Coalition for Environmental Justice  
 Simon Truong, Executive of the Refugee Federation Service Center  
 The Honorable Velma Veloria, State House of Representatives  
 Terry Williams, Environmental Director, Tulalip Tribe

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

- *Motion: To approve the June 13, 2001 agenda as submitted. Osaki requested an amendment to add an item on Persistent Bioaccumulative Toxins to the agenda. Approved as Amended Pageler/Locke*

### **ADOPTION OF MAY 9, 2001 MEETING MINUTES**

- *Motion: To approve the May 9, 2001 minutes as submitted.*
- *Motion/Second: Pageler/Chu the motion passed unanimously*

### **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH UPDATE**

Patty Hayes, Director, Policy, Legislative and Constituent Relations, Department of Health (DOH), reviewed the current status of the state budget. Safe drinking water standards (\$2.87 million expected with \$1.7 million of it for LHJs to deal with Group B water systems. Ms. Hayes also stated that vaccine funding and AIDS prescription drug program funding are part of current draft budget. She also mentioned the status of HB 1042-electrology and tattooing, and adult family home food handlers training. Maxine Hayes, State Health Officer, reported that DOH held its Sixth Annual Childcare Symposium. The scientific literature suggests that a minimum of 10 hours of public health intervention affects the quality of childcare received. Dr. Hayes also reported that DOH has a workforce development workgroup that will use the Board's recommendations on health care workforce diversity.

### **UPDATE ON PRIORITY SETTING FOR 2001-03**

Craig McLaughlin, Board staff member, gave an overview of the staff work assessing Board priorities. He referred to materials behind Tab 5 that included the draft report entitled "Report on Research to Inform Priorities for 2001-2003." Doreen Garcia, Board staff member, pointed out that a major theme of the survey of surveys as well as the interviews was the focus primarily on health indicators rather than on specific diseases.

Some of the findings from the interviews include:

- Little/limited knowledge of Board's role
- Significant agreement with criteria used to identify priorities
- Support for existing projects and short-list of projects
- Support for Board taking on broader health-care access issues
- Support for continuing work on health disparities
- Suggestions that Board address obesity as a priority
- Keep doing priority projects and build in some capacity for emerging issues
- Some interest in continuing State Health Report

Mr. McLaughlin suggested that Board members review the report and complete the worksheet for suggested 2001 SBOH Priorities in preparation for the July meeting. Board Member the Honorable Margaret Pageler, JD stated that she thinks one criterion is missing: What is the likelihood of the effort making a difference (which is different than it having a measurable outcome)? She stressed the importance of the Board to tackle problems where they actually can accomplish something as well as

those that have unanswerable questions. Board Member Thomas H. Locke, MD, MPH suggested that the criterion about prevalence, severity and availability of intervention should be rated individually. Board Executive Director Don Sloma reminded the Board that the information presented is a tool and should be used to assist their decision-making, not to limit Board members in any way.

### **SBOH STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OTHER BOARD BUSINESS**

Mr. Sloma announced that three staff people will be leaving: Janice Englehart, Senior Policy Advisor, is leaving the Board in September, Heather Boe, Executive Assistant, has resigned, and Donna Russell, Senior Policy Advisor, is leaving at the end of June. Desiree Robinson will be replacing Heather as Executive Assistant to the Board. Mr. Sloma is going to hire a full time staff person to replace Ms. Englehart and Ms. Russell. Mr. Sloma provided other information including a suggestion that all the Board's policies and procedures be available to the Board at every meeting. He discussed activities on health care workforce diversity, the Public Health Improvement Plan, and activities related to genetics. He encouraged the Board to be aware that policy issues such as genetics go beyond current literature and current opinion.

### **PROPOSED DELEGATION OF WAC 246-290, GROUP "A" PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS**

Board Member Carl S. Osaki, RS, MSPH, proposed that the Board delegate this particular rule revision of WAC 246-290, Group "A" Water Systems to DOH. He stated these rules are adoptions of federal rules that address four areas relevant to WAC 246-290: (1) public notification requirements, (2) disinfection profiling and benchmarking, (3) a maximum contaminant level for radio nuclides, and (4) lead and copper corrosion control measures. Final adoptions of the EPA rules are required to be in place by December 2002. He explained that he is not aware of any controversy that would cause the Board to retain authority for the revision. Chair Lake added that a statement related to specific aspects of the drinking water rule was provided by Dr. Lafe Myers, a resident of Bainbridge Island. His statement was included in Tab 7. Ms. Pageler suggested that Dr. Myers' concerns be considered by DOH during the rule revision process.

- ***Motion to delegate the proposed revision of WAC 246-290, Group "A" Public Water Systems to the Washington Department of Health.***  
***Motion: Osaki passed unanimously.***

### **PERSISTENT BIOACCUMULATIVE TOXINS**

Mr. Osaki distributed a draft letter addressed to several legislators, stating the Board's commitment to support the Department of Ecology's "Proposed Strategy to Continually Reduce Bioaccumulative Toxins (PBTs) in Washington State". He asked that the Board approve sending this letter to the relevant Senate and House Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs.

- ***Motion to approve sending the proposed draft letter to the relevant Senate and House Committee Chairs and Co-chairs stating the Board's support for the Department of Ecology's Persistent Bioaccumulative Toxin Strategy.***  
***Pageler/Lake passed unanimously.***

### **WELCOME**

Ms. Pageler welcomed the Board to Seattle on behalf of the mayor and the Seattle City Council. She stated that she is concerned about the term "environmental justice." She sees the need for good neighborhoods with productive businesses. There are three valuable social and economic goals in establishing quality neighborhoods: (a) affordable housing, (b) employment and jobs, and (c) vital businesses activity. These issues come into direct conflict in the two neighborhoods (Georgetown and South Park) visited this morning. She asked the Board consider the complexity of these interests as the meeting continues.

Ngozi Oleru, Chief, Environmental Health, Public Health Seattle-King County, welcomed the Board and provided relevant public health information about the South Park and Georgetown

neighborhoods. She described several projects that Public Health Seattle-King County is working on in these communities.

### **OVERVIEW OF SUBCOMMITTEE'S EFFORTS**

Mr. Osaki, chair of the Environmental Justice Subcommittee, provided an overview of the subcommittee's work. This summary is included in Tab 9.

Board Member Joe Finkbonner, MHA introduced the following panel of community representatives.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICES CONCERNS IN WASHINGTON**

Mr. John Guevara discussed his perspective and concerns regarding the impact of the environment on people's lives. He stated that his concerns were universal to the community. He described working families as being essentially "voiceless" in public processes. As a retired man, he is able to participate in this meeting, but his daughter is not because she is working. He is very concerned about the Duamish River and the contaminants reported to be in it. He added that he is concerned about the unintended consequences of products being rushed to the market. Mr. Guevara stated that public health protection needs to be a high priority as businesses prioritize their profits.

Mr. Jesus Rodriguez, community liaison from the SeaMar Community Health Centers, shared his perspective on the health status of his clients. He described his clients as low-income people from the community. They serve approximately 55,000 people each year. He stated that the main health problems the SeaMar sees are hypertension, diabetes, ear infections, as well as lead poisoning in people. They also provide well child checks. SeaMar is concerned about the effect of the environment on the members of this community. They see a lot of skin diseases and respiratory illnesses that might be associated with environmental exposure. Mr. Rodriguez asked the Board to look into all these problems—he relies on the researchers to figure out why these problems occur while SeaMar treats people for the health problems.

Mr. Terry Williams, Environmental Director, Tulalip Tribe, described a number of concerns he has related to environmental protection and justice. He addressed the growing need for collaborative and cooperative working relations among all concerned parties. He spoke of the need for responsible businesses to establish themselves on reservations, noting the importance of good land use planning and the problems tribes face when "dirty" businesses are not accountable. He also spoke of the need for creating comprehensive environmental protection plans that would include drinking water protection, wellhead protection, and septic system management. He then highlighted the problem that many tribes face with their subsistence lifestyles. Mr. Williams noted that increased pollution is making it even more difficult to obtain a traditional diet. As tribal people add more processed foods to their diet, they are experiencing much higher rates of cancer, diabetes, and heart disease. He identified global warming as one probable culprit to the decreasing food supply. He reinforced that global warming is a real issue that needs to be addressed. Tribal people are experiencing the negative effects in a diminished natural food supply. He attributes the decreasing number of salmon to the problem of global climate change. He also stated the need for improved data collection systems that tribes and other governments could share.

Mr. Daniel Ford, Advocacy Coordinator for Columbia Legal Services, described the problem of farmworker pesticide exposure. He noted that agricultural workers suffer from the highest rate of chemically related illness of any occupational group. Tab 10 provides a summary of his comments with specific statements of regulatory weakness in adequately protecting agricultural workers from pesticide exposure.

### **FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

Mr. Osaki provided a presentation about health status related to disproportionate burden of environmental exposure. (See overheads in Tab 10.)

## **HEALTH RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH ENVIRONMENTAL AND OCCUPATIONAL EXPOSURES**

Jim Krieger, MD, MPH, Epidemiology, Public Health, Seattle and King County, presented information on the prevalence of asthma in King County (see overheads). Representative Velma Veloria asked Margaret Pageler if the City of Seattle is doing anything to address the zoning problems in South Park and Georgetown. Ms. Pageler responded that the City has looked into these issues in the past. At this time, she replied there is no effort to change the existing zoning patterns.

Karen Larson, Ph.D., U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) provided an overview of the agency's activities. She described ATSDR's role in receiving petitions from community members who are interested in having health assessments conducted in environmentally contaminated areas. In Washington, this activity is delegated to DOH.

Rob Duff, DOH Office of Environmental Health Assessments, provided an overview of how the DOH Office of Environmental Assessments assesses health risks. (See overheads). He spoke in general about risk assessment and risk management practices and then more specifically about a health assessment that DOH conducted at the Phillip Services site in Georgetown.

Representative Veloria asked if there is a threshold for cumulative effect. Mr. Duff stated that they can look at contaminant exposures but they do not have much data on how they interact. He explained that policy makers attempt to set allowable exposure rates low enough that should not have to "count the bodies." He added that it would not be feasible to carry out the number of experiments that would be necessary to learn cumulative, interactive effects.

## **PROXIMITY TO ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS: IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH**

Michael Letourneau, EPA, Region X, Office of Civil Rights and Environmental Justice, summarized EPA's work on Environmental Justice and acknowledged the valuable collaboration that has occurred with the Department of Ecology and the State Board of Health. A summary of his presentation is included in Tab 13. He stated his support for the Subcommittee's recommendations.

Representative Veloria asked if Region X works directly with the State's Agriculture and Ecology Committee. Mr. Letourneau responded that Region X works with communities and sometimes with federal legislators. It does not tend to work with state legislators.

Mr. Ray Hellwig, Northwest Regional Director of the Department of Ecology, expressed Ecology's support for the Board's work and acknowledged Mr. John Ridgeway's effort to work with the Board on the issue of Environmental Justice. He also thanked the Board for approving the letter of support backing Ecology's Persistent Bioaccumulative Toxin Strategy.

Mr. Ridgeway from the Department of Ecology summarized the problem of disproportionate burden of industrial and waste facilities in low-income and minority communities, as described in the Ecology report on Environmental Equity. He stated that Ecology is in complete support of the Board's proposed recommendations and the agency is ready to work on them if the Board chooses to adopt them. He added that he hoped the Board would continue to provide support to the Interagency Workgroup on Environmental Justice until the group can function independently.

## **COMMUNITY EFFORTS TO ADDRESS ISSUES OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

Mr. Finkbonner introduced a panel of community leaders engaged in Environmental Justice work.

Simon Truong, Executive of the Refugee Federation Service Center, presented his views and concerns for refugees in Washington. He described the struggles that some refugees experience in coming to a new country, acclimating to its customs, and understanding its processes. He addressed the concerns about the refugee communities eating contaminated fish and the need for culturally appropriate risk communication.

Yalonde Sinde, representing the Community Coalition for Environmental Justice, recognized the Subcommittee's work on Environmental Justice, underscoring the need for collaboration and better coordination among all interested parties. She added that she hoped to see a community advisory group organized that would assist the Subcommittee with its work and its recommendation to the Governor. She emphasized that an executive order should be developed and proposed by communities. Ms. Sinde stated that it not essential to sacrifice individual health for economic well being. She added that government should air on the side of caution if there is not science to support people's health problems that may be caused by the environment. (See CCEJ handout)

Amy Duggan, American Lung Association, presented information about the Master Home Environmentalist (HEAL) Program. (See presentation overheads).

Alex Coleman, Project Manager of the Salishan Environmental Justice Study, provided an overview of this study. He spoke to the issues and needs of this low-income minority community in Tacoma. Mr. Coleman asked the Board to "adopt" the Salishan Community as a test site for its work. Mr. Coleman brought three Salishan residents to share their personal stories about the challenges of living in Salishan and how they have worked hard to address issue of environmental justice. One community representative spoke about the need to install light devices on smoke alarms for the deaf community. Another representative from the community stated that in Salishan, the needs and stress factors are great, often leading to poorer health. Another community representative spoke to the housing needs in Salishan, noting the poor housing also leads to poor health.

### **INDUSTRIES' POLLUTION SOLUTIONS**

Charlie Cundiff, executive director of the Environmental Coalition of South Seattle (ECOSS), provided a summary of his organization's work, providing pollution prevention assistance and technical advise to businesses in South Seattle. He was accompanied by Jack Scannel, a chemist and physicist on the ECOSS staff as Hazardous Waste Reduction Specialist. (See his handout). He described ECOSS's work as an almost impossible task of working between and among residents, businesses, government agencies, and environmental community. He described several success stories. Mr. Cundiff expressed concerns of industry that they are not being heard and their livelihood is being threatened. He mentioned concerns about lack of detail around the history of South Seattle neighborhoods, lack of industry participation in interagency workgroup, and the lack of recommendations involving either industry in general or the pollution reduction industry. He also suggested the need for recommendations that would lower the level of distrust and contentiousness that has developed.

Dinner Break

The meeting reconvened at 7:26 PM. Chair Lake emphasized the importance of signing up for people who wanted to testify.

### **JUSTICE AT THE CROSSROADS: GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITIES WORKING TOGETHER**

Ngozi Oleru, Chief, Environmental Health, Public Health Seattle-King County, addressed the Board about how communities and government can work together on environmental issues. Dr. Oleru expressed her gratitude that the Board has taken up this issue. She described some of her staff's work on environmental assessments in South Seattle. She suggested the definition of environmental justice used by the subcommittee means good equitable government, good business practices and good management of one's life. There is, however, distrust between communities and government agencies, but when agencies reach out, good and substantial things do happen. She spoke to the complexity of environmental justice issues. Environmental Justice, she said, is a dynamic process, not a static concept. She suggested that you cannot get at it with just numbers. Government needs to pay attention to the stories presented by people in the community. She iterated the importance of coordination and said single initiatives do not work. Seeking sustainable solutions must involve all stakeholders. The Board's efforts to promote coordinated government effort and engaging community are an important step. Dr. Oleru urged the Board to adopt and promote the recommendations in the report.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Mr. Osaki and Mr. Finkbonner presented findings and recommendations from the Subcommittee's work (see report and slide presentation). Dr. Locke suggested that the Board present its work at the NEJAC meetings in Seattle. Board Member Vickie Ybarra, RN, MPH asked about the scope of the recommendation about environmental justice and cultural competency training. Mr. Osaki said he thought all staff should have cultural competency training but certainly staff receiving environmental justice training should also be exposed to cultural competency training. Ms. Englehart read into the record the proposed environmental justice guidelines (Appendix 5 in the subcommittee's report.) Chair Lake asked about the future of the environmental justice interagency workgroup. Mr. Osaki said the recommendation is that DOH and Ecology continue the group, but both have asked the Board to continue to participate.

### **PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND OTHER HEALTH ISSUES**

Dr. Sandy Rock, Medical Research Director of the Pacific Northwest Pollution Resource Center (PPRC), co-founder of Solutions for the Elimination of wood Smoke Emissions (SENSE), and environmental committee chair of the Physicians for Social Responsibility acknowledged the Subcommittee's work and suggested that the Board adopt their recommendations. He also praised the Board's letter of support on Ecology's Persistent Bioaccumulative Toxin Strategy. He then urged the Board to think about wood smoke as an environmental issue.

Del Parkinson, a public citizen representing himself presented information about the possible links between cancer and exposure to petroleum-based synthetic linear alkylbenzenesulfonic acid (DDBSA) in laundry detergents. He referred the Board to a handout presented at the May 9, 2001 Board meeting.

Erleen Anderson representing herself as resident of the Jackson Place neighborhood of Seattle spoke about her health concerns related to the presence of a painting company in her community.

Robin Guevara introduced herself as a long-time South Park resident who takes 17 pills a day. She stated that she didn't realize when she moved to South Park how the area would affect her health. She explained that two years ago, she could only take a few steps without stopping to rest. Ms. Guevara continued that she and her husband pay over 1,000 a month in health costs—a tremendous penalty for living in South Park. As an advocate for seniors, Ms. Guevara explained that seniors don't have any clout in Olympia. As a member of many senior groups, she resents that. She added that seniors are confused and intimidated by DSHS forms. Drawing from her mother's difficulty with accessing dental treatment, she stated her concerns that the legislature will be reducing support for Medicaid, medical procedures and dental procedures for the elderly. She urged the recovery of funds for medical and dental procedures.

Dave Gering, representing the Manufacturing and Industrial Council of Seattle, urged active engagement with industry and business. He suggested the Subcommittee's report did not address sufficiently the need to engage business. He also spoke about the benefits of family wage jobs with industrial employers.

Mr. Cundiff said the first two Subcommittee recommendations were not far-reaching enough and the last one did not have enough detail. He urged the Board to work with the pollution prevention industry. He also said the guidelines may not be to achieve what the Subcommittee hopes it will. He asked whether there was a practical way to achieve some of the good ideas put forth.

David Fichtenberg discussed his concerns about the health risks associated with cell phones and cellular telecommunications facilities. He submitted written testimony.

Tim O'Brien, resident of Georgetown complained that he was not notified about the meeting. He stated that Georgetown and South Park are some of the worst cases of environmental justice on the planet. He charged that residents of Georgetown and South Park are not treated equally. He described

a prevailing attitude that people in these communities are expendable. He argued that it is not reasonable to have hazardous facilities around residentially zoned homes.

Allan Phillips, resident of Georgetown complained that he too was not notified about the meeting. He noted the lack of people from the neighborhood on Board and in the room. Mr. Phillips said the meeting is a complete sham because it does not include people from the neighborhood. He charged that people in the community were not notified.

### **BOARD DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION**

Ms. Ybarra suggested changing recommendation 1 regarding expanding the interagency workgroup to specifically name the members of affected communities and businesses. Ms. Englehart mentioned that Representative Veloria also wanted specifically to include legislators in the workgroup activities. Ms. Pageler asked for clarification about what was meant by “community” in the findings. Mr. Osaki suggested that the Subcommittee clarify the definition of community to include all interested stakeholders in its report and change the name of the “interagency workgroup” to reflect this change. Dr. Locke said it would be better to list those parties. Ms. Englehart suggested changing the language in recommendation 1 to include participation from community residents, community-based organizations, business and industry, tribal governments, and legislators.

Ms. Pageler asked who would ensure community participation. Mr. Sloma said these are the Board’s recommendations and the Board would want to ensure that by working with the workgroup. Chair Lake said that she heard comments about advancing the guidelines to the Governor’s attention. Mr. Osaki said the Subcommittee should make sure the guidelines are consistent with the Governor’s overall policies.

- ***Motion: To approve the Subcommittee’s recommendations as submitted with the following clarifying sentence added to Recommendation 1. “Community is defined as community residents, community-based organizations, business and industry, tribal governments and legislators.”***  
***Motion/Second: Osaki, the motion passed unanimously.***

### **ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.

WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

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Linda Lake, Chair